

Contact: Ed Pratt
Date: August 25, 2006
(225) 219-0679

Louisiana's Unemployment Rate Plummets to Record Low

The Louisiana Department of Labor, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), continues to closely monitor the economic impact of the recent hurricanes on the business and household surveys in the affected parishes. In producing the post-hurricane estimates, BLS announced that a number of modifications were made to standard estimating procedures to better reflect the employment part of the civilian labor force estimates. For a detailed explanation of the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on all of the BLS program's methodology, please go to <http://stats.bls.gov/katrina/cpscesquestions.htm>.

BATON ROUGE – Louisiana's unemployment rate for July 2006 dropped to 2.9 percent, the lowest ever for the state. The rate was 4.6 percent in June. The national unemployment rate increased to 4.8 percent in July from 4.6 percent in June. According to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS), conducted for the development of labor force statistics, the decrease was attributed to the number of residents who were unemployed but later found jobs from June to July, or those who did not participate in the labor force in July. The year-ago revised July unemployment rates were 5.6 percent for Louisiana and 5.0 percent for the U.S.

"Responses to the June and July CPS surveys show that while the size of our labor force is not where it once was, the people looking for work are finding jobs," said Secretary of Labor John Warner Smith. "Almost half of those persons who sought employment last month were successful. That is a very encouraging sign."

The state's civilian labor force for July 2006 decreased to 1,851,376, from 1,871,236 in June. The number of employed in July increased to 1,798,518, from 1,784,905 in June. Louisiana's unemployed for July dropped to 52,858, from 86,331 in June. The demographic data are based on a very small sample survey and are subject to large variances in producing labor force estimates.

Unadjusted unemployment rates compare parishes and metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) to the state. The July 2006 unadjusted unemployment rate for Louisiana was 3.5 percent, down from the June rate of 5.8 percent. The unemployment rates for the MSAs were: Alexandria, 3.2 percent, down from 5.2 percent in June; Baton Rouge, 3.3 down from 5.3; Houma, 2.5, down from 4.4; Lafayette, 2.5, down from 4.2; Lake Charles, 3.0, down from 5.0; Monroe, 3.2, down from 5.3; New Orleans, 4.2, down from 7.2; and Shreveport-Bossier City, 3.5, down from 5.3 percent last month. Lafayette Parish had the lowest unemployment rate at 2.3 percent in July, while East Carroll Parish had the highest rate at 8.1 percent.

Preliminary seasonally adjusted statewide total nonfarm employment for July 2006 was 1,778,700 compared to 1,769,300 for the revised June 2006 figure, for an increase of 9,400 workers. The sector breakdown was as follows: natural resources and mining, 48,200 employed in July, up from 48,000 employed in June; construction, 108,900, up from 107,500; manufacturing, 143,700, down from 144,000; trade, transportation, and utilities, 365,300, up from 364,200; information, 28,400, up from 27,800; financial activities, 95,500, down from 95,900; professional and business services, 172,900, up from 172,200; educational and health services, 214,300, up from 213,200; leisure and hospitality, 173,800, up from 171,200; other services, 58,400, up from 57,800; and government, 369,300, up from 367,500.

For more detailed information on the July 2006 employment data for Louisiana, visit our Web site at www.LAWORKS.net, scroll over the tab at the top of the page for Labor Market Information, click on Publications & Reports, and select LMI Bulletin.

Office of Occupational Information Services, Research and Statistics Division, Post Office Box 94094, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094
Phone (225) 342-3141 • Fax (225) 342-9192 • Toll Free (888) 302-7662 • www.LAWORKS.net
Equal Opportunity Employment Program-Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. 1-800-259-5154 (TDD)

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

| Area | July 2006 | | | June 2006 | | | July 2005 | | |
|--|---|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|
| | Employed | Unemployed | Rate | Employed | Unemployed | Rate | Employed | Unemployed | Rate |
| UNITED STATES | 145,606,000 | 7,602,000 | 5.0 | 145,216,000 | 7,341,000 | 4.8 | 143,283,000 | 7,839,000 | 5.2 |
| LOUISIANA | 1,827,222 | 66,897 | 3.5 | 1,802,977 | 110,923 | 5.8 | 2,024,129 | 134,800 | 6.2 |
| ALEXANDRIA MSA | 65,960 | 2,147 | 3.2 | 65,023 | 3,541 | 5.2 | 64,281 | 4,345 | 6.3 |
| Grant | 8,205 | 288 | 3.4 | 8,088 | 481 | 5.6 | 7,996 | 622 | 7.2 |
| Rapides | 57,755 | 1,859 | 3.1 | 56,935 | 3,060 | 5.1 | 56,285 | 3,723 | 6.2 |
| BATON ROUGE MSA | 345,088 | 11,646 | 3.3 | 341,015 | 19,193 | 5.3 | 341,329 | 22,540 | 6.2 |
| Ascension | 42,503 | 1,303 | 3.0 | 42,001 | 2,195 | 5.0 | 42,040 | 2,466 | 5.5 |
| East Baton Rouge | 204,742 | 6,737 | 3.2 | 202,325 | 11,001 | 5.2 | 202,512 | 12,841 | 6.0 |
| East Feliciana | 7,924 | 278 | 3.4 | 7,831 | 490 | 5.9 | 7,838 | 576 | 6.8 |
| Iberville | 11,863 | 613 | 4.9 | 11,723 | 1,014 | 8.0 | 11,734 | 1,173 | 9.1 |
| Livingston | 50,016 | 1,543 | 3.0 | 49,426 | 2,556 | 4.9 | 49,471 | 3,046 | 5.8 |
| Pointe Coupee | 9,379 | 414 | 4.2 | 9,268 | 652 | 6.6 | 9,276 | 894 | 8.8 |
| St. Helena | 3,888 | 250 | 6.0 | 3,842 | 414 | 9.7 | 3,846 | 504 | 11.6 |
| West Baton Rouge | 10,130 | 331 | 3.2 | 10,011 | 552 | 5.2 | 10,020 | 661 | 6.2 |
| West Feliciana | 4,643 | 177 | 3.7 | 4,588 | 321 | 6.5 | 4,592 | 378 | 7.6 |
| HOUMA-BAYOU CANE-THIBODAUX MSA | 92,070 | 2,363 | 2.5 | 89,621 | 4,132 | 4.4 | 94,164 | 4,939 | 5.0 |
| Lafourche | 43,687 | 1,136 | 2.5 | 42,525 | 1,976 | 4.4 | 44,681 | 2,320 | 4.9 |
| Terrebonne | 48,383 | 1,227 | 2.5 | 47,096 | 2,156 | 4.4 | 49,483 | 2,619 | 5.0 |
| LAFAYETTE MSA | 123,444 | 3,114 | 2.5 | 120,951 | 5,341 | 4.2 | 122,221 | 6,229 | 4.8 |
| Lafayette | 101,346 | 2,411 | 2.3 | 99,299 | 4,201 | 4.1 | 100,342 | 4,848 | 4.6 |
| St. Martin | 22,098 | 703 | 3.1 | 21,652 | 1,140 | 5.0 | 21,879 | 1,381 | 5.9 |
| LAKE CHARLES MSA | 89,854 | 2,756 | 3.0 | 88,460 | 4,664 | 5.0 | 91,118 | 5,673 | 5.9 |
| Calcasieu | 85,521 | 2,649 | 3.0 | 84,194 | 4,477 | 5.0 | 86,724 | 5,441 | 5.9 |
| Cameron | 4,333 | 107 | 2.4 | 4,266 | 187 | 4.2 | 4,394 | 232 | 5.0 |
| MONROE MSA | 78,584 | 2,607 | 3.2 | 77,287 | 4,344 | 5.3 | 79,283 | 5,396 | 6.4 |
| Ouachita | 68,689 | 2,284 | 3.2 | 67,555 | 3,808 | 5.3 | 69,300 | 4,717 | 6.4 |
| Union | 9,895 | 323 | 3.2 | 9,732 | 536 | 5.2 | 9,983 | 679 | 6.4 |
| NEW ORLEANS-METAIRIE-KENNER MSA | 421,948 | 18,573 | 4.2 | 411,955 | 32,198 | 7.2 | 611,731 | 38,783 | 6.0 |
| Jefferson | Household sample data were not available. | | | | | | 225,683 | 13,332 | 5.6 |
| New Orleans City/Orleans | | | | | | | 195,045 | 14,730 | 7.0 |
| Plaquemines | | | | | | | 11,501 | 742 | 6.1 |
| St. Bernard | | | | | | | 30,474 | 1,993 | 6.1 |
| St. Charles | | | | | | | 24,008 | 1,459 | 5.7 |
| St. John Baptist | | | | | | | 20,176 | 1,577 | 7.2 |
| St. Tammany | | | | | | | 104,844 | 4,950 | 4.5 |
| SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CITY MSA | 175,375 | 6,436 | 3.5 | 172,191 | 9,651 | 5.3 | 172,539 | 12,201 | 6.6 |
| Bossier | 49,827 | 1,464 | 2.9 | 48,922 | 2,315 | 4.5 | 49,021 | 2,868 | 5.5 |
| Caddo | 114,584 | 4,546 | 3.8 | 112,503 | 6,716 | 5.6 | 112,731 | 8,443 | 7.0 |
| De Soto | 10,965 | 426 | 3.7 | 10,766 | 621 | 5.5 | 10,787 | 890 | 7.6 |

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

| Area | July 2006 | | | June 2006 | | | July 2005 | | |
|---|-----------|------------|------|-----------|------------|------|-----------|------------|------|
| | Employed | Unemployed | Rate | Employed | Unemployed | Rate | Employed | Unemployed | Rate |
| NON-MSA PARISHES | | | | | | | | | |
| Acadia (Crowley) ¹ | 22,939 | 680 | 2.9 | 23,735 | 1,174 | 4.7 | 23,736 | 1,513 | 6.0 |
| Allen | 7,817 | 361 | 4.4 | 8,028 | 593 | 6.9 | 7,985 | 779 | 8.9 |
| Assumption (Pierre Part) ¹ | 8,933 | 450 | 4.8 | 8,938 | 729 | 7.5 | 9,288 | 933 | 9.1 |
| Avoyelles | 14,702 | 620 | 4.0 | 14,968 | 1,026 | 6.4 | 14,964 | 1,300 | 8.0 |
| Beauregard (DeRidder) ¹ | 12,888 | 521 | 3.9 | 13,196 | 742 | 5.3 | 13,524 | 1,055 | 7.2 |
| Bienville | 5,921 | 243 | 3.9 | 5,872 | 375 | 6.0 | 5,989 | 520 | 8.0 |
| Caldwell | 4,062 | 142 | 3.4 | 4,054 | 240 | 5.6 | 4,216 | 350 | 7.7 |
| Catahoula | 3,926 | 169 | 4.1 | 3,952 | 274 | 6.5 | 4,000 | 333 | 7.7 |
| Claiborne | 6,667 | 249 | 3.6 | 6,467 | 402 | 5.9 | 6,695 | 483 | 6.7 |
| Concordia (Natchez, MS-LA) ¹ | 6,728 | 394 | 5.5 | 6,594 | 613 | 8.5 | 6,673 | 653 | 8.9 |
| East Carroll | 2,496 | 219 | 8.1 | 2,497 | 306 | 10.9 | 2,648 | 421 | 13.7 |
| Evangeline | 11,259 | 442 | 3.8 | 11,362 | 729 | 6.0 | 11,607 | 878 | 7.0 |
| Franklin | 7,071 | 384 | 5.2 | 7,238 | 589 | 7.5 | 7,406 | 724 | 8.9 |
| Iberia (New Iberia) ¹ | 30,761 | 992 | 3.1 | 30,763 | 1,685 | 5.2 | 31,248 | 2,066 | 6.2 |
| Jackson (Ruston) ¹ | 6,024 | 195 | 3.1 | 6,001 | 334 | 5.3 | 6,151 | 389 | 5.9 |
| Jefferson Davis (Jennings) ¹ | 13,497 | 380 | 2.7 | 13,716 | 630 | 4.4 | 13,860 | 758 | 5.2 |
| La Salle | 5,604 | 169 | 2.9 | 5,695 | 279 | 4.7 | 5,615 | 355 | 5.9 |
| Lincoln (Ruston) ¹ | 17,275 | 666 | 3.7 | 17,207 | 1,110 | 6.1 | 17,639 | 1,252 | 6.6 |
| Madison (Tallulah) ¹ | 4,152 | 242 | 5.5 | 4,256 | 355 | 7.7 | 4,369 | 467 | 9.7 |
| Morehouse ¹ | 10,568 | 614 | 5.5 | 10,635 | 958 | 8.3 | 10,911 | 1,183 | 9.8 |
| Natchitoches (Natchitoches) ¹ | 16,117 | 627 | 3.7 | 16,727 | 1,022 | 5.8 | 16,732 | 1,252 | 7.0 |
| Red River | 3,066 | 155 | 4.8 | 2,998 | 239 | 7.4 | 3,135 | 340 | 9.8 |
| Richland | 7,995 | 329 | 4.0 | 7,879 | 563 | 6.7 | 8,125 | 690 | 7.8 |
| Sabine | 8,983 | 264 | 2.9 | 8,834 | 431 | 4.7 | 9,206 | 571 | 5.8 |
| St. James | 7,920 | 442 | 5.3 | 7,894 | 704 | 8.2 | 8,523 | 863 | 9.2 |
| St. Landry (Opelousas, Eunice) ¹ | 35,444 | 1,213 | 3.3 | 35,531 | 2,013 | 5.4 | 35,600 | 2,364 | 6.2 |
| St. Mary (Morgan City) ¹ | 20,760 | 813 | 3.8 | 20,090 | 1,385 | 6.4 | 21,044 | 1,870 | 8.2 |
| Tangipahoa (Hammond) ¹ | 44,703 | 1,830 | 3.9 | 43,704 | 3,010 | 6.4 | 47,331 | 3,328 | 6.6 |
| Tensas | 1,994 | 123 | 5.8 | 1,961 | 215 | 9.9 | 2,138 | 224 | 9.5 |
| Vermilion (Abbeville) ¹ | 21,951 | 680 | 3.0 | 22,540 | 1,154 | 4.9 | 22,580 | 1,396 | 5.8 |
| Vernon (Fort Port South) ¹ | 19,696 | 857 | 4.2 | 20,251 | 1,081 | 5.1 | 20,206 | 1,641 | 7.5 |
| Washington (Bogalusa) ¹ | 14,268 | 665 | 4.5 | 14,062 | 1,108 | 7.3 | 15,426 | 1,313 | 7.8 |
| Webster (Minden) ¹ | 18,913 | 663 | 3.4 | 18,890 | 1,042 | 5.2 | 18,639 | 1,431 | 7.1 |
| West Carroll | 3,849 | 248 | 6.1 | 4,150 | 389 | 8.6 | 4,116 | 567 | 12.1 |
| Winn | 5,954 | 215 | 3.5 | 5,789 | 359 | 5.8 | 6,139 | 434 | 6.6 |

¹In addition to the eight (8) Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in Louisiana, there are seventeen (17) Micropolitan Statistical Areas (MCs): Jackson and Lincoln Parishes combine to constitute the Ruston MC area. Civilian Labor Force can be derived by adding employed and unemployed. For related information or data, please visit:

www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm.